and Union Territories have been asked to enforce the provisions of the Act with regard to trade in imported ivory effectively. Regional Offices of the Directorate of Wildlife Preservation have also been alerted to be on the look out for any illegal trading activity in ivory.

ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में प्राकृतिक पर्यावरण

1275. **श्री शिव प्रसाद चनपुरिया :** क्या **पर्यावरण और वन** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों के नैसर्गिक पर्यावरण को प्राकृतिक वनस्पति तथा भूमि की स्वाभाविक बनावट नष्ट करके चरणबद्ध तरीके से बिगाड़ा जा रहा है ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसे रोकने के लिए सरकार द्वारा क्या कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं तथा इसमें सरकार को कितनी सफलता मिली है ?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री कमल नाथ) : (क) हाल के वर्षों में देश के पर्यावरण और प्राकृतिक संसाधनों पर दबाव बढ़ा है ।

(ख) प्राकृतिक पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा के लिए विभिन्न विनियामक और संवर्धन उपाय शुरु किए गए हैं जिनमें अलग-अलग स्तर पर सफलता मिली है । इन उपायों में पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा के लिए विधायी उपाय और प्रवर्तन तंत्र और वनों एवं वन्यजीवों की सुरक्षा के लिए उपाय-वनीकरण और परती भूमि विकास, प्रदूषण निवारण एवं नियंत्रण, भूमि एवं मृदा क्षरण को रोकना, पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव मूल्यांकन, जनजागरूकता पैदा करना और गैर-सरकारी संगठनों का सहयोग लेना आदि शामिल है ।

Fresh water Dolphin

1276. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that fresh water dolphin is facing extinction; and

(b) if so, the measures Government propose to take to save it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The population of fresh water dolphin or the Gangetic dolphin has declined seriously over the years due to habitual restruction in rivers and unregulated fishing. According to IUCN Red Data Book, it has been classified as a vulnerable texa.

(b) The measures taken by the Government to save the species include:

(1) Steps have been taken to reduce the pollution in the river Ganga.

(2) The species is included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act and enjoy total legal protection.

(3) A status survey of the species is being carried out in river Ganga to obtain information on biology and population of the species and to correlate the population with the quality of water of the river.

(4) A sanctuary for the protection of the species called Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary in a portion of the river Ganga has been notified in Bihar.

Seizure of Snake Skins

1277. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether snake skins worth over Rs. 10 lakhs were recently seized at the Indira Gandhi Airport, Delhi;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

(c) what is the annual seizure of snake skins at various points of smuggling (with value) and what is the estimated value of snake skins smuggled out of the country unchecked.

(d) what efforts have been made so far to identify the illegal traders of snake skins in the country and their contacts both within and outside the country: and

(e) wha is the outcome thereof stating the measures taken so far to check the illegal trade in snake skins which is banned under the Wildlife Protection Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) On 21.5.92, 1848 pieces of snake skins derived from python rat snake and water snake were seized by the Delhi Custom Authorities from a Swedish National. No precise value of the seized skins can be determined as there is no legal trade in the species in this country. However, the value of the consignment in panchnama has been assess to be approximately Rs. 1,84 lakhs.

(c) The seizures made by the Custom Authorities At Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Delhi during 1991 were as follows:

Name of port	No. of snake skins/ items seized
Madras	76 wallets and 49 bags
Calcutta	4 snake skin purses
Delhi	199 skins and 28 skin articles
Bombay	4221 pieces
Total	4420 skins and 157 items

(d) Wherever during cross examination of the persons apprehended with the illicit goods, some information regarding others engaged in the illegal trade comes to light, raids on trading establishments are carried out with the help of local police authorities, with the extent of results varying from case to case.

(e) Measures taken to prevent such incidents are;

(i) Regional Deputy Directors, Wildlife Preservation, have been posted at four major ports i.e. Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, and Madras. Asstt. Director, Wildlife Preservation have been posted under them carry out surprise checkings at the port with the help of Custom Authorities.

(ii) the officials of state wildlife wing also carryout periodic checkings of the stocks held by the licenced dealers under the order of Hon'ble High Courts. Raids are also organised by these officials to apprehend illegal traders, whenever any intelligence in this regard is received.

(iii) A system of cash rewards has been introduced for getting intelligence about smugglers.

(iv) India being a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Cooperation of International Community is also obtained in apprehending the smugglers.

(v) Cooperation of Directorate, Revenue Intelligence Coast Guard, Border Security Force and C.R.P.F. is also taken in safeguarding against smuggling of Wildlife products.

Fire in Jammu and Kashmir Forest Corporation Depots

1278. SHRI SHABBIR AHMAD SALARIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item under the caption S.F.C. Depots fires-Nexus between officials, contractors which appeared in the daily Kahmir Times, Jammu; dated the 8th May, 1992;

(b) what is the value of loss of timber in the fires in Neeltrath Chanderkot, Aarpichlakhari Depots of S.F.C.; and

(c) whether any case has been registered against the accused and or any departmental proceedings; instituted?